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Roundup



New Horizons

The first mission to distant planet Pluto is under way after the successful launch of NASA's New Horizons spacecraft from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.

New Horizons roared into the afternoon sky aboard a powerful Atlas V rocket on January 19 at 2 p.m. EST.

The 1,054-pound, piano-sized spacecraft is the fastest ever launched, speeding away from Earth at approximately 36,000 miles per hour, on a trajectory that will take it more than 3 billion miles toward its primary science target. New Horizons will zip past Jupiter for a gravity assist and science studies in February 2007, and conduct the first close-up, in-depth study of Pluto and its moons in summer 2015.



Valentines come in all shapes and sizes, from paper hearts to candlelit dinners—and now stellar nurseries resembling shimmering pink rosebuds. NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope, formerly known as the Space Infrared Telescope Facility, has captured with its infrared eyes a pink and green rose-like picture of a cluster of newborn stars known as a nebula.

Space Center Roundup

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Joanne Hale Editor
Kendra Phipps Assistant Editor
Catherine Borsché and Brad Thomas Staff Writers
Marshall Mellard Graphic Designer

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A VALENTINE
in the sky

FROM THE director

A MESSAGE FROM CENTER DIRECTOR MICHAEL L. COATS



Wellness

BEAK'S BODY SHOP is now open for business! The Lt. Gen. Jefferson D. Howell Fitness Facility in the Gilruth Center is just one aspect of the new JSC Exploration Wellness Program.

The wellness program includes not only the 7,000-square-foot state-of-the-art fitness facility, with 36 new pieces of top-of-the-line cardiovascular equipment and new weight-training equipment, but also a professional fitness staff, a dietician, behavior change programs, group exercise classes, and a Web tool for wellness assessment. The renovated men's and women's locker rooms have 300 lockers each and new shower facilities. Beak is justifiably proud of the new fitness facility he sponsored, and we should all take advantage of it as much as possible.

The Exploration Wellness Program is your program, designed to encourage the JSC team to make healthy decisions and take responsibility for its overall well-being. Individual wellness is an important contributor to a safe and highly effective workforce at JSC, but more importantly each and every one of us owes it to our families to take good care of ourselves as much as we take good care of them. I certainly don't mean to lecture, but I speak with the voice of painful experience. For many years after leaving NASA, I devoted increasingly longer hours to work, exercising irregularly at best, and the only healthy meals I enjoyed were Diane's home cooking in between my airline, hotel and fast-food meals on the road. I set a very poor example, and paid the price 15 months ago with a near-fatal heart attack. I was extremely fortunate to survive a "wakeup call" with no permanent damage, and I've learned a lot about heart disease. For example, most first heart attacks are fatal with few if any warnings, and four times as many women die of heart attacks than die from breast cancer.

I'm not proud of the poor example I set, and I regret terribly what my family had to endure, but I say all this in the hopes that you can learn from my experience. Recent research shows that any exercise has significant benefits, and the Exploration Wellness Program and Beak's Body Shop provide all the help anyone could need. Taking care of yourself is something you owe to yourself, and, more importantly, something you owe to your family. I encourage you to make it a priority in your daily activities.

Watch for the March edition of the Roundup, which will feature full coverage of the Starport Fitness Center Grand Opening as well as fitness info.

IT'S A MYSTERY

Out of Africa

by Brad Thomas

What do a rocket,
NASA engineers, an
African safari guide and
an outhouse have
in common?

*They are involved in a 30-year-old
mystery that has come to a close.*

WELL... ALMOST

The mystery began in 1975 when Graham Sheppard was flying doctors to a remote landing strip in western Zambia. Sheppard, accompanied by his then 6-year-old son Ian, saw a piece of metal near an airstrip that caught his eye. According to the Sheppards, the out-of-place piece of metal had numbers, a NASA inscription and "U.S.A." printed on it.

Graham took a picture of the metal with a local man posing next to it when he returned to the site in 1976.

Years later, Graham showed the picture to his younger son, Richard. This sparked Richard's interest in recovering the metal and finding out its origins. Since Richard was an African safari guide in Zambia, he was able to search for the object.



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